



Note to Correspondents

FOR RELEASE: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2002

EPA ANNOUNCES CREATIVE APPROACHES FOR HELPING AMERICANS RECYCLE, RECOVER ENERGY, MINIMIZE WASTE AND REVITALIZE THE LANDSCAPE

Dave Ryan, 202-564-7827 / ryan.dave@epa.gov

Urging Americans to take renewed responsibility for their individual impact on the environment, EPA today announced the kickoff of a campaign challenging Americans to meet or beat two goals by 2005: Boosting the national recycling rate from 30 percent to at least 35 percent, and curbing by 50 percent the generation of 30 harmful chemicals normally found in hazardous waste. To help meet the goals of the Challenge, EPA also announced 12 new innovative projects that will test creative approaches to waste minimization, energy recovery, recycling and land revitalization.

The program, called the "Resource Conservation Challenge," was announced by EPA at the National Recycling Coalition's 21st Annual Congress and Exposition in Austin, Texas.

"We are challenging all Americans to take a 'hands-on' approach to helping conserve our precious natural resources," said Marianne Lamont Horinko, EPA Assistant Administrator for Solid Waste and Emergency Response. "EPA is asking Americans to adopt smart environmental practices, make smart environmental purchases, reuse more products, and recycle at least one pound of their household waste a day. The results of the Resource Conservation Challenge and the innovative projects will be less waste, more economic growth and greater energy savings and recovery."

The Resource Conservation Challenge comprises 68 projects whose hallmarks are flexibility, partnership and innovation.

For example, in one of the projects, EPA is asking businesses and industry to join a "Waste Minimization Partnership Program" to help achieve the national goal of a 50 percent reduction of 30 harmful chemicals by 2005. These chemicals, such as lead, are among the most harmful to public health and the environment. The five founding members of the partnership are American Video Glass, Corning Asahi, Dow Chemical Corp., International Truck and Engine, and Toyota Motor Manufacturing.

EPA will do its part to support those actions that will contribute to meeting the Challenge goals. These efforts include:

- Establishing partnerships and alliances with industry, states and environmental groups.
- Providing training, tools, and technology assistance for businesses, governments and citizen groups.

- Getting the word out through outreach and assistance to the general population, especially to youth and minority groups.

In addition to the Resource Conservation Challenge, EPA is also partnering with states, academia, non-profits, tribes and local government and industry to test innovative ideas to make EPA's waste programs more efficient and effective. Twelve innovative projects from around the country were announced by EPA today. These creative projects demonstrate approaches to waste minimization, energy recovery, recycling and land revitalization that may be replicated across various industries, communities and regions. The projects range from making plastics from plant materials, to demonstrating the reuse potential of recycling residential building materials. For example, one project will develop and solicit designs for readily reusable packaging for products purchased electronically through the internet.

Founded in 1978, the National Recycling Coalition, Inc. is a nonprofit organization representing all the diverse interests committed to the common goal of maximizing recycling to achieve the benefits of resource conservation, solid waste reduction, environmental protection, energy conservation and social and economic development.

Learn more about the Challenge at: <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/osw/conserved/index.htm>
Learn more about the Innovations *Projects* at: <http://www.epa.gov/oswer/IWG.htm>.